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NEVADA STATE HEALTH DIVISION NEWS RELEASE

Nevada State Health Division Announces Two Confirmed Human Cases of West Nile Virus in Churchill County

Carson City – The Nevada State Health Division has received confirmatory test results of two human cases of West Nile Virus (WNV) in two Churchill County residents. One individual is under the age of 50 and one individual is over the age of 50. This brings the total confirmed human case count in Nevada to five: two in Clark County, one in Washoe County and two in Churchill County.

One of the Churchill County individuals had West Nile fever and the other individual had the more severe form of the disease.

In addition, there is a probable human case of West Nile fever in a Churchill County resident over the age of 50.

“West Nile Virus has been detected throughout the state,” said Dr. Bradford Lee, Nevada State Health Officer. “I cannot stress enough the importance of practicing the preventive measures to reduce the chance of being bitten by mosquitoes. Remember to use mosquito repellent containing DEET, wear long sleeve shirts, pants and socks, be aware that mosquitoes are most active during dusk and dawn, remove standing water from around your house and check to make sure the screens on your windows and doors fit properly.”

West Nile Virus most often is spread by the bite of an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes are WNV carriers that become infected when they feed on infected birds. Infected mosquitoes can then spread WNV to humans and other animals when they bite. West Nile Virus is not spread through casual contact such as touching or kissing a person with the virus.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), most people infected with WNV will not have any type of illness or symptoms. It is estimated that 20 percent of the people who become infected will develop West Nile fever. Symptoms include fever, headache, tiredness and body aches.

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Approximately one in 150 persons (less than one percent) infected with WNV will develop a more severe form of the disease, West Nile encephalitis or meningitis. Symptoms of the more severe disease include severe headache, high fever, neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, coma, tremors, convulsions, muscle weakness and paralysis.

People 50 years and over are more likely to develop serious symptoms of WNV if they do get sick.

While there is no specific treatment for WNV infection, people who have been exposed to mosquitoes and experience symptoms of the more severe illness are encouraged to contact their health care provider immediately.

Dr. David Thain, Nevada State Veterinarian, continues to urge owners of horses, donkeys and mules to get their animals vaccinated. "While there isn't a vaccine for humans, there is a vaccine available for horses, donkeys and mules. If you haven't vaccinated your equines, you need to vaccinate them now."

For more information about West Nile Virus, please access the following websites:

<http://health2k.state.nv.us>

<http://agri.state.nv.us>

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SPECIAL NOTE TO THE MEDIA:

Updated Nevada human case counts will be available every Friday morning.

Telephone numbers to report sick/dead birds:

Department of Agriculture: 775-688-1180, Ext. 231

Las Vegas: 702-383-1251

Carson City: 775-887-2190

Telephone numbers for public health questions:

Statewide: 775-684-4014

Washoe County: 775-328-2434

Carson City: 775-887-2190

Clark County: 702-385-INFO (4636)

Animal Health Questions:

Statewide: 775-688-1182, Ext. 232